

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ADDIS 00274 180946Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /009 W

-----181009Z 076783 /10

R 180710Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2350

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

CONFIDENTIAL ADDIS ABABA 0274

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (SEELYE, TALCOTT W.L

SUBJ: PROJECTED VISIT OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY TALCOTT W. SEELYE

REF: A. STATE 002036, B. ADDIS ABABA 0081,

C. ADDIS ABABA 0250 (NOTAL)

1. DURING CALL ON MOFA DIRECTOR AMERICAN DIVISION BERHANE
DERESSA JAN 17, I RAISED WITH HIM PROJECTED SEELYE VISIT.

BERHANE IMMEDIATELY RESPONDED THAT MOFA HAD HEARD FROM MEKBIB
ABOUT THE VISIT, AND HAD TELEGRAPHED MEKBIB THAT FONMIN KIFLE
WILL BE OUT OF TOWN ATTENDING OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING
AT LOME AT THAT TIME.

2. BERHANE EXPRESSED PERSONAL PLEASURE AT PROPOSED VISIT AND
ASSURE ME THAT HE WOULD ARRANGE GOOD SCHEDULE TO INCLUDE
ACTING FONMIN IF KIFLE NOT HERE. HE THEN WONDERED ALOUD
WHETHER DATES FOR VISIT HEREMIGHT BE JUGGLED TO INSURE THAT
SEELYE AND KIFLE MEET. I TOLD HIM I HAD NO IDEA, BUT
WOULD PASS ON HIS QUERY TO DEPT.

3. BERHANE WAS NOT SURE OF DATES OF LOME MEETING. WE
HAVE DOUBLE-CHECKED WITH OAU, HOWEVER, AND CONFIRMED
MEETING WILL BE HELD FEB 21-28, WHICH WOULD INDEED
ELIMINATE POSSIBILITY OF KIFLE -SEELYE MEETING IF KIFLE
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ATTENDS. THIS WOULD BE A MATTER FOR SOME REGRET, SINCE AS
DEPT AWARE, NEST RANKING MOFA OFFICER IS PERMSEC GETACHEW
KIBRET WHO, WHILE HE CAN BE FORTHCOMING VERY OCCASIONALLY,
IS NOT VERY FRUITFUL. I THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT SEELYE
CONSIDER POSSIBILTIY OF CHANGING DATES TO ARRIVE HERE
AFTER FEB 28, BUT WILL UNERSTAND IF THIS CAUSES PROBLEMS
FOR SEELYE AND /OR OTHER POSTS.

4. LATER ON DURING CALL ANDIN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT, I INQUIRED WHETHER PMAC FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN WAS LIKELY TO BE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO DIPLOMATS IN HIS NEW CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. BERHANE'S REPLY WAS REASONABLY POSITIVE. HE THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE ABLE ARRANGE SOMETHING IF SUBJECT WAS "IMPORTANT ENOUGH," CITING CALLS ON MENGISTU REPORTED IN PRESS OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS (ALL OF WHICH WERE VISITING DELEGATIONS OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER, MOSTLY FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES). BERHANE MAY BE SOMEWHAT OVERLY OPTIMISTIC, BUT HIS REPLY WAS SUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING TO ENCOURAGE ME TO THINK THERE MAY BE REAL POSSIBILITY FOR SEELEYE MENGISTU MEETING AS PROPOSED REFTEL (C).

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